

STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

for Socialism | por el Socialismo



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Solidarity beats back Facebook

Community and women's groups were banned by social media monopoly

By Greg Butterfield

Social media network Facebook is relied upon by millions of people around the globe for communication. But under billionaire CEO Mark Zuckerberg and his fellow owners, Facebook serves the interests of profit, not people. Facebook launched its latest attack on leftists and people's organizations shortly after the inauguration of President Joe Biden.

Pages of several left organizations in the U.S. and Britain were summarily removed on Jan. 21–22. Hundreds of activists affiliated with those pages had their Facebook profiles “disabled” — that is, banned. When activists tried to appeal the decision, they were all notified that the ban was permanent and could not be appealed due to alleged, unspecified “violations of community standards.”

In the U.S., the pages of the Peoples Power Assembly, a leading anti-police brutality group based in Baltimore, and Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha, a nationwide women's organization affiliated with the Women's International Democratic Federation, were removed by Facebook.

Sixteen activists who perform administrative duties on those pages — many of them contributors to Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and members of the Socialist Unity Party across the U.S. — were banned. As a result, several other pages administered by these activists were silenced, including the Atlanta Peoples Power Assembly, Prisoners Solidarity Committee, Solidarity with Antifascists in Novorossiia and Ukraine, and Youth Against War & Racism.

The Socialist Workers Party of Britain, one of that country's largest left parties, was similarly hit. Not only the party's main page but many of its local branch pages were removed, along with activists' profiles. This was just days before the Jan. 25 International Day of Solidarity with Yemen, an effort against the U.S.–Saudi war in which the British SWP had a significant organizational role.

Also banned were anti-fascist networks and individuals targeted as “antifa,” and pages affiliated with the World Socialist Web Site in the U.S. and in Britain, where the group has been a vocal part of the movement to prevent the extradition of Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

These organizations quickly took legal actions to challenge the Facebook bans, carried out media campaigns, and urged supporters and movement allies to bombard Facebook with protests.

As a result, by Jan. 27 most of the disabled pages had been restored. Many of the affected activists learned of the reversal only by word-of-mouth — Facebook offered no explanation for the bans or notification of the sudden reversal.

According to a report in the Financial Times — the British equivalent of the Wall Street Journal — “Facebook said it had mistakenly removed a number of far-left political accounts, citing an ‘automation error,’ triggering uproar from socialists who accused the social media platform of censorship.

“Facebook did not respond to requests to clarify how the error had occurred and why it had affected the personal accounts of socialist figures.”



**PEOPLES POWER ASSEMBLY & WOMEN IN STRUGGLE
FACEBOOK PAGES SHUT DOWN
ALONG WITH 16 ACTIVISTS' PAGES
WITHOUT CAUSE**



**Tell Facebook: STOP
SILENCING THE VOICES
OF COMMUNITY,
WORKERS,
ANTI-RACISTS, BIPOC,
WOMEN'S, ANTI-WAR
AND SOCIALIST GROUPS.**

**Groups announce campaign to
restore pages & fight censorship**
PeoplesPowerAssembly.org
#FacebookCensorship

Reactivate: Peoples Power Assembly, Women In Struggle / Mujeres En Lucha, and all of the activists impacted and the pages they administer. @Facebook

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Facebook protects
Zionism 7

Free Ahmad Sa'adat,
free Palestine!

Power concedes nothing without demand

“It was solidarity that won the reversal,” said Sharon Black of the Peoples Power Assembly. She pointed out that there was no avenue to restore the pages until the targeted groups alerted supporters and media and threatened legal action.

“We began to hear from many other activists about unfair censorship and arbitrary Facebook decisions, without a clear appeals process. Most of those impacted have been Black, Latinx, Palestinian, BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and People of Color], women and other communities whose voices have too often been marginalized.”

For years, Facebook and other U.S.-based social media monopolies have frequently silenced left organizations and activists fighting for national liberation and opposing U.S. wars and racism, while ultraright groups allied with U.S. imperialism and police agencies were given free rein. Only in the wake of mass outrage following the Jan. 6 coup attempt at the Capitol have hatemonger

Donald Trump and some of his racist allies faced restrictions.

Media outlets based in other countries that present critical views of U.S. actions are also frequently silenced. Latin America-based teleSUR, Iran's Press TV and the Korean Central News Agency are among those routinely suppressed.

While Facebook was shutting down activists' accounts in the U.S. and Britain, its counterpart Twitter was targeting Latin American socialists.

The official Twitter account of the Venezuelan National Assembly, which recently elected a pro-socialist majority, was shut down Jan. 22. But the account of the previous National Assembly headed by U.S.-backed coup leader Juan Guaidó is still active. “Double standards,” declared Venezuela's democratically elected president, Nicolás Maduro.

Meanwhile, the Twitter accounts of the Bolivarian Movement for a New Colombia and the

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Rosa Parks vs. Amazon

By Stephen Millies

The labor of Amazon workers during the COVID-19 disaster has been absolutely essential. At least 20,000 of them have caught the coronavirus while working through the pandemic.

Without any labor of his own, Amazon boss Jeff Bezos added another \$13 billion to his fortune on the single day of July 20, 2020, the month before Bezos took away his employees’ \$2 per hour hazard pay. Meanwhile, the Bezos fortune has swollen to \$191.8 billion as of this Feb. 4.

Amazon workers are fighting back. Over 2,000 Amazon workers have signed union cards at the company’s huge Bessemer, Ala., fulfillment center, just outside Birmingham.

They want to be represented by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union. It’s part of the 1.3 million member strong United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

The warehouse workers are sick of being constantly monitored like they are machines. Even going to the bathroom can be cause for being harassed by management. They want the \$2 pay cut restored.

Amazon is spending millions of dollars to fight the organizing drive. Bezos knows that if the Bessemer workers win a union contract, a million other Amazon workers will want one too. Mail-in balloting for the union representation election begins Feb. 8.

The union drive is moving forward in the spirit of Rosa Parks. The Black seamstress sparked the 382-day-long Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott by refusing to give up her seat to a white man on Dec. 1, 1955.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King started his journey for justice with the bus boycott. It would take him to Memphis, Tenn., where he would be assassinated on April 4, 1968. He was



Amazon fulfillment center in Staten Island, N.Y. Workers at a similar facility in Bessemer, Ala., will vote on unionization.

there supporting the city’s striking sanitation workers.

Bombingham

The Birmingham, Ala., area was the steel center of the South. Tens of thousands were employed by U.S. Steel in the company’s steel mills and coal mines there.

In 1930, 13,000 Black miners accounted for the majority of the workers in the local mines. Not all of them were paid.

Until June 1, 1928, U.S. Steel operated the Flat Top mine with the slave labor of 800 Black prisoners. Reparations are still owed for this atrocity. (“Slavery by Another Name,” by Douglas A. Blackmon)

Dr. Angela Davis — who California Gov. Ronald Reagan tried to send to the gas chamber in 1971 on frame-up charges — grew up in Birmingham. It was known in those days as “Bombingham.”

Four Black girls were murdered when Birmingham’s 16th Street Baptist Church was bombed on Sept. 15, 1963. They were Addie Mae Collins, aged 14; Carol Denise McNair, aged 11; Cynthia Wesley, aged 14; and

Carole Robertson, aged 14.

Earlier in 1963, Birmingham Sheriff Theophilus Eugene “Bull” Connor used attack dogs to bite Black people protesting segregation. Forty years later, U.S. troops occupying Iraq for Big Oil used dogs against demonstrators in Baghdad.

Behind Bull Connor was U.S. Steel, which dominated the local economy. The blue chip corporation was put together by Wall Street banker J.P. Morgan. Today’s JPMorgan Chase bank has \$3.37 trillion in assets.

U.S. Steel committed more crimes by closing and downsizing its Alabama mills. In 1982, it fired 3,500 workers at its Fairfield, Ala., works, the largest steel mill in the South.

Just as in the Midwest and Northeast, a tidal wave of factory closings struck the Birmingham area. Many of the jobs destroyed were in unionized plants with union pay and benefits.

Four hundred workers in Bessemer lost their jobs when Stockham Pipe and Fittings closed in the late 1990s. The communist leader and union organizer Hosea Hudson worked there in the early 1930s.

Bull Connor and Jeff Bezos

Jeff Bezos is walking in the footsteps of J.P. Morgan and Bull Connor in trying to crush the organizing drive at the Bessemer warehouse. The \$190 billion boss wants to stop workers from mailing in their ballots for union representation.

Isn’t that what the Trump campaign tried to do in the presidential election? The resistance of postal workers and their unions stopped Trump’s sabotage.

Mailing in ballots isn’t just a matter of health during the pandemic, even though it’s safer than waiting in line to vote. Bezos wants workers to vote in person so Amazon will have one more chance to bully them.

Amazon is spending millions to try to defeat the union drive. Anti-union banners decorate the Bessemer warehouse.


Workers are urged to visit a slick company website that uses the lying slogan “Do it without dues.” Many workers want to do it without Bezos, who even took away their leave time during the pandemic.

Bezos announced plans to give up his CEO title in order to spend more time on space rockets. He should be sent to pick orders instead.

Management even posted anti-union leaflets in the bathroom stalls. This isn’t free speech. It’s intimidation that should be outlawed.

Amazon has brought in Harry Johnson, a former member of the National Labor Relations Board, to help stop the union. Johnson is a member of the Morgan Lewis law firm that specializes in union busting.

Whatever the results of the upcoming representation election, Amazon workers will continue to fight for justice. Their struggle is an inspiration to millions of other workers employed by Walmart, Home Depot and other chain stores.

Henry Ford was forced to sign a union contract. So will Jeff Bezos. 

The Senate says no to \$15

By Stephen Millies

The United States Senate voted unanimously against raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour. Not a single senator yelled “nay” in a Feb. 4 voice vote that prohibited the pay increase.

Could any of these senators live on \$7.25 per hour? Hell, none of them could live on \$70 an hour! They take home \$174,000 per year.

The amendment offered by Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst prevents raising the wage during the COVID-19 pandemic. It’s a slap in the face to millions of essential workers, many of whom earn poverty wages but deserve much more.

Ernst claims that “a \$15 federal minimum wage would be devastating for our hardest-hit small businesses at a time when they can least afford it.”

This is the same old argument that claims a small business “can’t af-

ford safety equipment.” It’s too bad a worker had their hand cut off. At least they had a job.

The labor movement’s answer is that if a capitalist can’t afford to operate their business safely, they shouldn’t be in business. The same applies to poverty wages.

Sen. Ernst’s crocodile tears about small business shouldn’t fool anybody. She has never complained about Walmart, which drove thousands of mom and pop stores out of business.

The current \$7.25 federal minimum wage is actually a 40% cut from what it could buy in 1968. To match the buying power of the 1968 wage, \$12.19 would be required, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ inflation calculator.

The wage cut of nearly \$5 per hour amounts to over \$10,000 stolen from workers over an entire year of 40-hour workweeks. The tens of billions of additional profits are supersized wage theft. Millions of workers who

may get tips don’t even qualify for \$7.25.

\$15 will be won on the streets

In a surprising move, Sen. Bernie Sanders also supported the Ernst amendment. His excuse was that this would prevent an immediate vote on a bill to increase the minimum wage, which would probably lose.

Several Democratic senators, including Manchin from West Virginia and Teeter from Montana, oppose a \$15 wage. That’s what the AFL-CIO leadership gets in return for endorsing these politicians.

Sanders’ action will be confusing and probably demoralizing to millions of people who consider the Vermont senator as their champion. What difference does it make if raising the minimum wage is shot down by an amendment or by a losing vote on an actual bill?


Here’s how Sanders explained his position: “It was never my intention

to increase the minimum wage to \$15 immediately and during the pandemic. My legislation gradually increases the minimum wage to \$15 an hour over a five-year period and that is what I believe we have got to do.”

Well, millions of workers need that \$15 and more right now. Landlords aren’t waiting five years to collect their rent.

One of the demands of the 1963 March for Jobs and Freedom — where Dr. King gave his “I Have a Dream” speech — was a \$2 minimum wage. Its biggest advocate was A. Philip Randolph, the protest’s organizer and leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

According to the inflation calculator, a minimum wage of \$16.97 would be required to match the \$2 per hour that was demanded in August 1963.

The only way we can overcome a bought-and-paid-for Congress is for millions of people to take to the streets. 

GameStop mania: The real losers in Wall Street gambling

By Gary Wilson

How crazy is the stock market? The stock of the totally bankrupt Blockbuster Video chain store — all stores closed in 2014 — surged more than 700% on Jan. 26. The stock of AMC, the borderline bankrupt movie theater chain, surged more than 300% on Jan. 26. Earlier, bankrupt stocks, commonly called penny stocks, like JCPenney, Hertz and Pier 1 saw speculative spikes driving stocks up 50% or more.

At the same time, a trading frenzy has sent silver prices to an eight-year high.

The news headlines, however, have gone to the GameStop mania. GameStop is a chain store that is in decline as gamers have moved online for purchase of games that are downloaded. Although the company is failing, speculators drove its stock price up more than 1,600% in January.

The historic stock market crash of 2020, now called the Coronavirus Crash in the business press, saw the market indexes fall some 40%, making it the deepest plunge in history. Despite the crash, the stock market ended the year of 2020 up more than 75%, an all-time high.

There's no hidden surprise in that. The Federal Reserve and other major banks have injected more than \$4 trillion in cash and credit since the crash. Much of this credit went into speculation in financial assets. Stock market purchases made on this borrowed credit are now at a record high.

The growth in stock market values enriched the U.S. financial oligarchy, with some 644 billionaires gaining more than \$1 trillion in net worth in just a few months.

From March 2020 to January 2021, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos' wealth

jumped 60%, Tesla's Elon Musk 628%, Microsoft's Bill Gates 23% and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg 68%.

Fictitious capital

Karl Marx called stocks and the stock market fictitious capital. Capital invested in the physical means of production and workers is what Marx called real capital.

A company raises funds by issuing stocks. The owners of the stock shares have a claim on the future earnings of the company. There is a secondary market, however, that is speculative trading in the stock shares themselves.

This speculative gambling is completely removed from capitalist production of goods and services, that is, from real capital. And since the Tulip Mania in the 17th Century, bouts of wild speculation in fictitious capital have been seen as a symptom of an underlying crisis.

Marx wrote: "All nations with a capitalist mode of production are seized periodically by a feverish attempt to make money without the mediation of the process of production."

Reddit and Robinhood, oh my

The current speculation mania has been aided by something new: a group of independent day traders, including many former bankers now trading on their own, coordinating their purchases on online forums, particularly the Reddit forum r/wallstreetbets.

Their activities have been facilitated by the rise of commission-free stock trading services, such as Robinhood and Schwab's TD Ameritrade — both intimately tied into Wall Street banks — which allow small investors to trade stocks with no

overhead fees, often using funds lent to them by the trading services.

The news accounts have played this up as a David vs. Goliath story. And reports indicate that there were indeed a great many small investors involved in the purchase of GameStop shares, helping to drive up its price.

But it was Elon Musk (not a small trader) who was one of the promoters of the operation, tweeting "gamestonk" and linking to r/wallstreetbets.

And looking at the volume of trading in GameStop, amateur investors were not the big movers of the stock. GameStop went from trading less than 13 million shares a day in November to over 150 million shares per day on multiple days in January.

A more accurate description of the whole operation would be Goliath vs. Goliath, a vicious gambling game between rich guys who held big stakes in GameStop versus a handful of hedge funds that had massively risked short selling the stock.

To short a stock means to bet the share price will fall. The hedge fund Melvin Capital lost some \$3.5 billion on its short bet. On the other side, for example, is Michael Burry, the man who made a fortune in the 2008 financial crash (his character was played by Christian Bale in the movie "The Big Short"), who owns millions of GameStop shares and potentially made a billion dollars in the gamble.

As with previous speculative bubbles, the share prices in GameStop went up because many were buying, and many bought because prices were going up. That is, until it reaches a point in which traders start to sell, thinking it won't go up any more, leading share prices down and then more selling because prices are going down. The bubble will burst

and many will lose.

A Washington Post report is headlined: "As GameStop stock crumbles, newbie traders reckon with heavy losses. The Reddit forum that helped kick off the frenzy has given way to anxiety, financial bloodshed and infighting."

Capitalist crisis

The GameStop mania reflects the general sickness of the capitalist system.

With some 30 million jobless and 35% of the population facing loss of their home in the next few months, dozens of major corporations in or near bankruptcy and hundreds of thousands of small businesses closed altogether, you'd think Wall Street might reflect that heavy burden. Instead the stock market has gone up to a record high.

A speculation frenzy has preceded every major financial disaster in history. Prior to the Wall Street crash of 1929, hundreds of thousands of small investors piled into the stock market hoping they might get out of their own precarious situations. In 2008, it was another speculation frenzy, only with houses: everyone was urged to take on bad mortgages they could not afford.

The stock market has long been divorced from the production of goods and services. Instead of investing in production, capitalists gamble in the stock share casino.

All of the money that is currently used for speculation, with no real relationship to actual production of goods and services, could be used to meet the pressing needs of hundreds of millions for jobs, housing, education and health care.

Wall Street shows again that the capitalist system is rotten and should be abolished. 📌

Cuba's Nasalferon protects against COVID-19

By Cheryl LaBash

As early as April 24, 2020, information that nebulized interferon prevented COVID-19 infection and also produced better outcomes if administered early in COVID-19 infection was known and available in the U.S.

According to Prensa Latina, as of Jan. 7, 2021, Nasalferon interferon nose drops are being administered to international travelers arriving in Havana and the Cuban families that plan to receive them. International flights from the U.S. resumed in mid-November, causing a sharp spike in COVID-19 infections.

The Nasalferon drops add to the protocol of a PCR test at the airport, and five days quarantine after arrival plus a negative PCR test, before international visitors depart for Cuban destinations.

The Saving Lives Campaign initiated by the U.S.-based National Network on Cuba and the Canadian Network on Cuba advocates and organizes for opening medical and scientific collaboration with Cuba. It was formed to respond to the stag-

gering number of pandemic deaths, publishing reliable information and documents.

A document by Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, "Potential Effect of Interferon and Treatment Recommendations Against COVID-19," describes in detail the use and effectiveness of nasal interferon. It is available for download at the National Network on Cuba website.

An early report from China shows these results: "Among the 2,944 subjects in our study, 2,415 were included in the low-risk group, including 997 doctors and 1,418 nurses with average ages of 37.38 and 33.56 years, respectively; 529 were included in the high-risk group, including 122 doctors and 407 nurses with average ages of 35.24 and 32.16 years, respectively.

"The 28-day incidence of COVID-19 was zero in both the high and low-risk groups. The 28-day incidence of new-onset clinical symptoms with negative images for



PHOTO: PRENSA LATINA

PCR tests and Nasalferon nose drops are being administered to international travelers arriving in Havana.

pneumonia was also zero in both the high and low-risk groups. As control, a total of 2,035 medical personnel with confirmed COVID-19 from the same area (Hubei Province) was observed between Jan. 21 to Feb. 23, 2020. No serious adverse events were observed in our trial during the intervention period."

The unilateral U.S. economic war against Cuba known as the blockade

or embargo ruptures mutually beneficial collaboration and exchange between the U.S. and Cuba. Additionally, the racist demonization of China obscured the positive outcome reports by that country's medical experts.

On March 24, 2020, Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine researchers registered these preliminary results with ClinicalTrials.gov, making it known to U.S. researchers.

We continue to ask: Why has this not been tried in the U.S.? More than 3,000 health care workers have died from COVID-19. The U.S. death toll is nearing half a million people. More than 1 in every 1,000 residents of the U.S. has died. Could it have been prevented?

It isn't too late.

For more information about the Saving Lives Campaign, write to SavingLives [at] US-CubaNormalization.org or this writer at Cheryl [at] NNOC.info. 📌

UKRAINE: Workers protest utility price hikes demanded by U.S., IMF

By Greg Butterfield

On New Year’s Day, the price of electricity, gas and oil for heating, and other utilities doubled for most households in Ukraine. The surprise price-hike was announced by President Vladimir Zelensky’s government under orders of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The IMF, dominated by U.S. and Western banks, demanded these harsh measures in exchange for loans to bail out the government.

Throughout January, thousands of people took to the streets in protest across this country of 44 million people in Eastern Europe, in large cities, small towns and rural areas. They blocked highways, occupied government buildings and took other actions to demand immediate relief from the unbearable price hikes.

For many, it was the last straw after seven years of austerity, war, fascist violence and sped-up privatization of the country’s industry and natural resources.

Since Ukraine’s democratically elected government was overthrown with U.S. support in early 2014, the price of utilities has risen by approximately 900%. Pensioners and many workers now receive bills for these basic necessities equal to or greater than their monthly income. Their only choice has been to go into debt until they are dragged into court, or sit home in the cold and dark.

Except now, people have decided they have another choice: to resist.

“The ‘tariff gift’ for the holidays was a real shock to the people,” says Andriy Manchuk, editor of Liva.com.ua. “This inhuman policy is a direct result of pressure from Western creditors.”

He explained: “The Ukrainian authorities signed a memorandum with the IMF, pledging to raise tariffs, force accumulated utility debts from non-payers, and end controls on pricing in the gas market so that residents in Europe’s poorest country buy gas at the price paid by consumers in the European Union — even if this gas is produced on Ukrainian territory.”

On Jan. 28, protesters in Kiev, the capital city, marched on the U.S. and EU embassies to demand a repeal of the utility prices, aid for small businesses struggling during the pandemic, and against restrictive language laws.

Why did they go there? Activist and journalist Dmitri Kovalevich writes: “They used to [protest] in front of Ukraine’s parliament and presidential office with

no result. Then they realized who the real masters of Ukraine are and who is responsible for everything in our country.”

The group Chevrone (Red), which participated in the Kiev march, reported: “The demands of the protesters already go much further than just demands for lower gas prices. ... Protesters noted that the Ukrainian government is a servant of the oligarchs and the IMF. And it was at the request of the IMF, contrary to the Constitution, that the sale of land, medical, educational, labor and pension reforms were introduced in Ukraine.”

Mass action, real dangers

In 2014, Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. and the NATO military alliance shared a goal with neo-Nazis in Ukraine: to establish a military beachhead to threaten the neighboring Russian Federation.

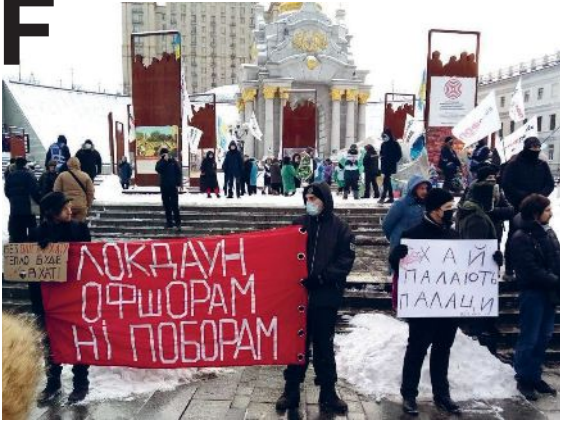
After the coup installed a new government under Washington’s thumb, the fascist gangs took over the streets as its enforcers. They attacked communists and socialists, immigrants and national minorities, union activists and Jewish people, feminists and LGBTQ2S people, and anyone else perceived as a threat to the new regime.

The ultra-right groups were recruited into the ranks of the police and military. They also formed their own military battalions to wage war against the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, where there was mass opposition to the coup. Military attacks on residents of Donetsk and Lugansk began in April 2014, and a month later people in those areas voted overwhelmingly for independence.

Most progressive political expression in Ukraine has been suppressed since 2014. At least 48 people were massacred by the neo-Nazis on May 2, 2014, in the city of Odessa. Thousands of leftists were forced into exile under threat of death or imprisonment, and thousands more were jailed.

Today, fascist groups scour the internet and social media looking for individuals to target with threats and violence. Those singled out can also count on being “investigated” by the government security services. Recent victims include a young woman from Kiev who posted on TikTok that she would like to visit Russia as a tourist, and a visiting African medical student in Zaporizhzhya who objected to the government’s suppression of Russian and other languages.

This Jan. 1, as they do every year,



Jan. 28 rally in Dnipropetrovsk. PHOTO: LIVYTSYA

This is just a small sample of the creative, courageous protests people are undertaking in Ukraine.

End U.S. intervention!

What about the new U.S. administration? Where does it stand?

Joe Biden, in his previous position as vice president, served as the Obama administration’s point person on Ukraine after the 2014 coup. Biden’s job was to keep the new government in line, to make sure that austerity was being imposed on the people and privatization was being carried out to please Wall Street, while keeping up military pressure on the independent republics of Donbass and Russia. This was carried out under the signpost of “fighting corruption.”

Now President Biden and his new Secretary of State Anthony Blinken signalled that they would continue this “anti-corruption” focus at the expense of Ukraine’s workers and poor.

“Demanding the results of the fight against corruption from Ukraine’s anti-corruption agencies, created with the help of the United States, is like demanding results from the treatment of a disease by an agent who simply pretends to be a doctor,” Dmitri Kovalevich wrote in his January update for the website New Cold War.

“Ukraine’s corrupt officials are held accountable only if they dare to deviate from the pro-American course. Evidence is collected by the anti-corruption agencies, but nothing is investigated while they are loyal to the U.S. and they are allowed to continue stealing,” Kovalevich said.

In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. warned, “The bombs in Vietnam also explode at home; they destroy the hopes and possibilities for a decent America.” Working people in the U.S. saw how Washington’s support for fascist movements abroad boomeranged with the white-supremacist attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6.

When our class sisters and brothers in Ukraine are defying danger unleashed upon them by the U.S. government, we have a responsibility to support them and demand: Stop the IMF’s killer austerity measures! End U.S. intervention in Ukraine! 🇺🇦

far-right groups held their annual torchlight parade in Kiev commemorating their hero, Ukrainian Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera.

So it was no small thing for working people and pensioners to take action publicly against the utility hikes. Both the government and the fascist movement denounce the protesters as “unpatriotic,” “pro-Russia,” and “communists.” In Ukraine, any one of those charges can mean being fired, beaten, jailed — or worse.

‘No tariff genocide’

On Jan. 10, 100 residents of Nikolaev blocked the Ingul Bridge, while in the village of Vysoky, 50 people blocked the Kharkov-Simferopol highway. Holding posters reading “No tariff genocide” and “People are not cattle,” they allowed emergency vehicles to pass and let traffic through every 15 minutes.

These tactics inspired others. On Jan. 12, a coordinated action by protesters in five regional cities blocked three major highways connecting the eastern and western parts of Ukraine.

Then, on Jan. 15, 300 protesters in Zhytomyr stormed the regional council building (similar to a state capitol), demanding to meet with local officials to discuss ways to roll back the price of utilities.

In many cities, the protesters have been supported by local officials.

On Jan. 16-17, a new left-wing group, Livytsya, joined protests in Dnipropetrovsk: “Dnipro doesn’t give up! Despite the raging frosts, the left came out to protest against tariff genocide.”

On Jan. 19, young people affiliated with the Party of Shariya, a political party founded by an opposition blogger, held actions in six cities, wearing only T-shirts in the frigid cold to draw attention to the plight of pensioners suffering without heat.

“While the authorities are basking in warm offices or relaxing in the Maldives, Ukrainians are forced to turn off the heat in order to pay the bills,” the group said.



Zhytomyr residents occupy regional council building, Jan. 15.



Vysoky protesters block Kharkov-Simferopol highway, Jan. 10.

Haiti ‘on the verge of explosion’

By Kim Ives

The usually clogged and bustling streets were empty in Haiti’s capital, Port-au-Prince, as well as other cities like Cap Haïtien in the North and Les Cayes in the South, as a general strike called by Haiti’s unions and supported by the opposition brought industry, transportation, and commerce to a nationwide standstill on Feb. 1 and 2.

It was a replay of the extended “peyi lòk” (locked up country) demonstrations which almost drove President Jovenel Moïse from power in late 2019. The difference this time is that, according to Haiti’s 1987 Constitution, Moïse must step down on Feb. 7.

While Moïse and the opposition have argued since the start of his term about whether that departure should be the Feb. 7 of 2021 or 2022, Haiti’s Bar Association (FBH) seems to have finally put the matter to rest. In a six-page Jan. 30 resolution, the body concluded that what’s good for the goose is also good for the gander.

In legal terms, President Moïse is subject to the same “restrictive interpretation [of the Constitution] imposed on parliamentarians on Jan. 13, 2020,” when Moïse forced all of the Deputies and two-thirds of the Senators to resign and began ruling by decree, the FBH wrote.

As a result, “the mandate of President Jovenel Moïse must end on Feb. 7, 2021, i.e. ‘five years... following the date of the elections’” and “the Provisional Electoral Council unilaterally appointed by President Jovenel Moïse has no legitimacy to organize the next electoral calendar.”

The next day, the two principal wings of Haiti’s constantly uniting and then fracturing opposition — the Political Direction of the Democratic Opposition (DIRPOD) and the Dessalines Children Platform (PPD) of former Sen. Moïse Jean-Charles — along with a smaller, newer coalition known as the National Front for Democracy (FND), announced the Terrace Garden Final Accord, which created the “National Commission for the Establishment of the Transition (CNT) composed of 15 members as follows: Seven members of civil society... [and] eight members from the political parties, groups, and groupings of the opposition.”



The normally thronged streets of Port-au-Prince were eerily empty during the anti-Moïse general strike of Feb. 1 and 2.

(An outlier in recent years, the Lavalas Family party of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide did not sign the accord.)

The CNT is tasked with appointing before Feb. 7 “as President a Supreme Court [Court de Cassation] judge, regularly appointed, deemed to be honest, deemed capable of respecting the [transition’s] roadmap, and against whom no charges of action contrary to the rule of law have been levied.” If it fails to find a suitable judge, the CNT “will choose from among one of the powers that the Commission has deemed duly established or any other suitable institutional solution. This procedure will be adopted and applied by the Commission by consensus or by a 2/3 majority vote.”

For the Prime Minister (Haiti’s most powerful executive post), all the opposition groups who signed the Terrace Garden Final Accord will present the CNT with a list of candidates. The CNT’s supposedly separate civil society and political wings then chooses seven of the candidates, votes for one of them, and then submits their choice for approval to the president they have just chosen.

As the Terrace Garden Final Accord was unveiled, anti-government demonstrations were taking place not only in the capital but in other cities like Cap Haïtien, Saint-Marc, and Pétionville and rural towns including Mirebalais and Verrettes.

In the face of these developments, on Feb. 1, Jovenel Moïse again took to the airwaves as he did exactly one week earlier, to make a one hour 19 minute rambling and at times incoherent video address to the nation, trying to blunt the growing movement against him. He vowed that he would remain in office to respect the “will of the Haitian people.”

“Jovenel Moïse doesn’t have power,” he said. “That master is not the big shot who sits plotting or writing a nice declaration so that he can seize power. Power has only one master. That master is called: the Haitian people. That means the 12 million who live in Haiti and the four million living in the diaspora.”

Concerning his dismantling of Haitian state institutions and re-writing the Constitution, he said: “When I speak, I want you to understand that this system which I found here, which I said I would destroy, it’s not me who is destroying it, it’s you, the Haitian people, since you put me here to destroy it.”

He also claimed that “the way I see things going, by the end of February, if not mid-February, we will be completely out of this coronavirus thing.” Haiti has not yet received any vaccines and has seen a spike in COVID-19 cases over the past month, registering 187 cases on Jan. 26, according to the John Hopkins Coronavirus Research Center.

Most importantly, Moïse’s new chief of police Léon Charles has been

very aggressive against demonstrators, just as he was against anti-coup anti-occupation uprisings in 2005, which is the reason he’s been reactivated.

Human rights lawyer Mario Joseph, who heads the International Lawyers Office (BAI), spoke out against the police repression in a Jan. 27 press conference. “The BAI is extremely concerned that the corrupt PHTK [Haitian Bald Headed Party] government has weaponized the PNH [Haitian National Police] to use bullets, teargas, physical aggression, arbitrary arrests, and imprisonment to crush popular protests,” Joseph said.

On Feb. 2, Jovenel Moïse lost an ally whose defection almost always is a harbinger of a regime’s fall: the Catholic Church. “It seems to us that everyone agrees that no one is above the law and the constitution in the country,” wrote Haiti’s 10 bishops in an open letter, noting, like the Bar Association, that through his actions in January 2020, the president had “affirmed the unity of the law for all elected officials, including himself.”

“The country is on the verge of explosion,” the bishops continued. “The daily life of the people is death, assassinations, impunity, insecurity. Discontent is everywhere, in almost all areas. Many enraging topics, such as: how to establish a Provisional Electoral Council, how to write another constitution, etc. So it is not only the ravages of kidnapping that make the country totally unlivable. Should we accept or tolerate this?”

In 1986, it was the Catholic Church’s open divorce from Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier’s dictatorship which quickly brought about his flight from the country on Feb. 7 of that year, thereby establishing the start-date of a repeatedly betrayed democracy which Jovenel Moïse is now being called on to respect.

One week before Baby Doc fled the country, he declared on television that he would remain in power “as strong as a monkey’s tail.” Today, Haitians everywhere are now waiting to see if Feb. 7 this year will look anything like that of 35 years ago.

Source: *Haïti Liberté*

Solidarity beats back Facebook

Continued from page 1

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP Second Marquetalia) were also shut down, along with the groups’ pages on YouTube (owned by Google).

Berta Joubert-Ceci, organizer of the International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes in Puerto Rico and founder of Women In Struggle, had her profile banned. “It is appalling — the cowardice of Facebook in silencing the voices of women and progressive people who struggle for justice and a better life for all,” she said.

Solidarity turns the tide

Within hours of Facebook removing the pages of the PPA, Women In Struggle and affiliated activists, the groups had issued a statement alerting the progressive movement

and the media to the attack. People’s attorney Alec Summerfield wrote a letter to Facebook threatening legal action.

The groups’ statement in English and Spanish spread across email and social networks like wildfire. It was reprinted by numerous websites, including FightBack News in the U.S., Insisto-Resisto in Venezuela and the French anarchist site Info Libertaire.

In Puerto Rico, the Union of Electrical Industry and Irrigation Workers (UTIER) took up the case. A union representative went on the radio to read the statement and denounce Facebook’s actions.

Staff at the Philadelphia Free Press reached out to their contacts at Facebook and urged workers there to demand a reversal of the company’s decision. Labor Against Racist

Terror shared the statement with its network of union activists, urging them to call, email and tweet Facebook executives.

“We want to thank everyone who took time to lend their support,” said PPA’s Sharon Black. She recalled that the PPA’s page and many of the same activists were similarly banned in late October 2020, just days before the presidential election.

Then, too, they had to fight to get the pages and profiles restored. At the time, Facebook collaborated with the Department of Homeland Security and fascists in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C., area to try to sabotage a protest the group was organizing against Donald Trump’s threat to overturn the election.

“We’re still unsatisfied” with Facebook’s response, added Rasika

Ruwanpathirana, an immigrant activist and filmmaker who was targeted. He told Struggle-La Lucha that the so-called Oversight Board recently set up by Facebook bosses is entirely inadequate.

“The PPA and Women In Struggle are advocating for genuine change. This includes an independent people’s oversight of this giant monopoly that in this period, particularly with the pandemic, has become a necessity in much the way that power and water utilities are.

“Oversight includes full transparency, decision making on ‘community standards,’ a speedy appeal procedure and liability for damages on the part of Facebook.”

Ruwanpathirana concluded: “If Facebook won’t do right, it’s time for Facebook to belong to the people.” 🌱

The negative repercussions of ‘sanctions’

By Pasqualina Curcio

At the invitation of President Nicolás Maduro, Dr. Alena Douhan will visit our nation. Dr. Douhan is the Special Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Commission covering the negative impact that unilateral coercive measures have on the enjoyment of human rights. She is coming to gather information related to the effects of the so-called sanctions imposed by the United States against the Venezuelan people. With regard to her visit, we consider it pertinent to make some clarifications.

The timing. The unilateral coercive measures began in 2013 and not in 2017 as some claim. With covert practices, the U.S. government has hindered, since 2013, Venezuela's transactions with the international financial system, including access to credit. The manipulation of the country's financial risk index was one of the actions they undertook. It suddenly went from 768 in 2012 to 2,625 in 2016. It varied, inexplicably 242% in a context in which our country had US\$ 30 billion in international reserves, around US\$ 88 billion a year in exports and we were punctually meeting our foreign debt commitments; between 2013 and 2015 alone we paid some US\$ 60 billion.

In 2016, Germany's Commerzbank closed PDVSA's accounts. Citibank did the same and Portugal's Novo Banco reported the impossibility of carrying out dollar transactions with Venezuela. These are just a few examples.

The financial blockade began long before Obama issued the Executive Order in 2015 declaring us an "unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States".

It is not just "sanctions." U.S. aggressions against Venezuelans are not limited to "sanctions." Between



PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

2013 and 2016, Venezuelans suffered programmed and induced shortages of essential products that led to long lines and rationing as a result of the disruption of distribution channels by transnational monopolies. An inexplicable shortage in a country that, for that period, registered the highest GDP in 30 years and 70% higher than that of 2020.

Silently in 2013, the U.S. government began to attack our currency by inducing an escalation in prices. Between 2013 and 2020 the U.S. has induced a depreciation of the bolivar in the order of 234,009,360,274%, resulting in a variation of 30,700,127,469% in prices. At first, they did it covertly until, in December 2019, Republican State Senator Richard Black confessed that it was they who had demonetized the bolivar.

They are not just numbers, they are faces, names and surnames. The economic and financial blockade has not only hindered the import of essential goods, it has also affected oil production and therefore the domestic supply of fuel, as well as the export of hydrocarbons that generate 90% of our foreign exchange earnings. Oil production has fallen 82% between 2013 and 2020, while exports have fallen 76%.

At the same time, the attack on the

bolivar has not only induced an escalation in prices but has also affected domestic production due to the loss of purchasing power.

As a result of the blockade of PDVSA and the attack on the bolivar, Venezuelans have stopped producing around US\$ 170 billion between 2016 and 2019 alone. A figure that, for Venezuelans, is equivalent to the import of medicines and food for 40 years, or the equivalent of the resources needed for the provision of health services, public and private, for 25 years, or for education at all levels for 20 years.

To these economic losses, we must add the almost US\$ 25 billion that are being held in international banks or that have been stolen from us in assets, as in the case of Citgo, a subsidiary of PDVSA.

These big numbers have faces, names and surnames. In 2019 and as a consequence of the "sanctions" 12 children with leukemia could not receive bone marrow transplants because the banks refused to make the transfers. Batches of medicines have been withheld because of the economic blockade, just as food has been withheld. The pandemic has been no different; on the contrary, they have intensified the "sanctions" and blocked the fuel needed to transport food, medicines and patients. An 18-year-old girl in labor died in Maturín because the ambulance had no petrol. A young man also died in Táchira due to lack of petrol. There are many testimonies like these.

By confession... these are crimes against humanity. What began covertly in 2013 has gradually been formalized through laws and executive orders by consecutive U.S. governments. It has also been brazenly confessed by White House spokespersons who have not only stated that they have been blockading us, attacking our currency and that the main target is PDVSA, but have also publicly acknowledged the suffering

that these actions entail for all the Venezuelan people. Former U.S. Ambassador William Brownfield said that the "sanctions" against PDVSA would have an impact on the entire people and that it was necessary to accelerate the collapse even if it meant suffering for months or years.

Crimes against humanity are, according to the Rome Statute, "those committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against a civilian population, with knowledge of the attack."

The excuses. Believing itself to be the policemen of the world, unilaterally and in violation of international humanitarian law, the U.S. has tried to justify the coercive measures with the discourse of the alleged dictatorship and narco-state in Venezuela.

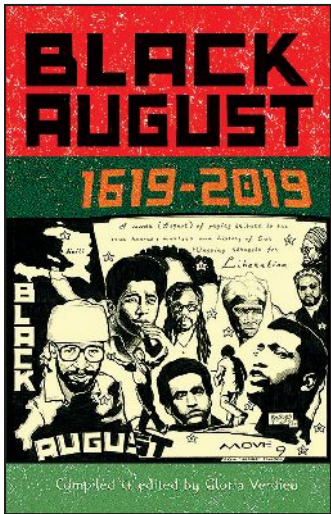
In the last 8 years, 8 elections have been held in Venezuela with an automated electoral system that in less than 24 hours produces irreversible results and has been audited by all parties involved in the electoral contest.

Without any proof, as they have tended to do to justify interference (remember the war in Iraq), they have accused us of being a narco-state. It is the case that, in the reports published by the United Nations, Venezuela does not even appear as a producer, consumer or distributor of drugs.

The real reason behind the U.S. aggressions against the Venezuelan people was stated by Elliot Abrams before the U.S. House of Representatives: "We, who are the champions of democracy in the world, have always proven that socialism has been a failure everywhere it has tried to impose itself, and therefore we cannot allow Venezuela to be the exception".

How the Venezuelan people, the government, and the armed forces have resisted democratically and peacefully for eight years in the face of such an onslaught is invaluable information that Dr. Douhan should gather during her visit. Perhaps scheduling meetings with ordinary people could contribute to this important task that was entrusted to her.

Source: Ultimas Noticias, translation Resumen Latinoamericano, North America bureau



‘BLACK AUGUST 1619-2019’

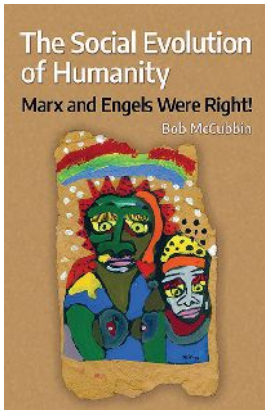
commemorates 400 years of Black freedom struggle
This book examines the construction of a racial capitalist venture — slavery — where the histories of African, Native and working people overlapped.

- ➔ Especially celebrates the legacy and accomplishments of Black women.
- ➔ The book is dedicated to Black, Brown, oppressed, and poor people who have been imprisoned and killed by the U.S. criminal justice system.

Historical series by M. Matsemela-Ali Odom

- ★ Contributions by Gloria Verdieu
- ★ Carl Muhammad ★ Zola Fish ★ Mary Lou Finley
- ★ Dennis Childs ★ Eusi Kwayana ★ Mumia Abu-Jamal
- ★ Curtis Howard ★ Poem by Sylvia Cameron Telafaro

<https://tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5>



The Social Evolution of Humanity Marx and Engels were right!

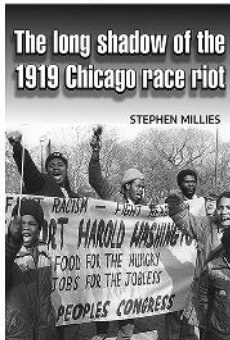
This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels' masterful work, 'Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.'

McCubbin is the author of 'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.'

First published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin's unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.

<https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7>

The long shadow of the 1919 Chicago race riot



by Stephen Millies

SLL articles include:

- Bombings greet the Great Migration
- What did the unions do?
- Communists fight racism and evictions
- Chicago Mayor Daley's racist machine
- Never forget Fred Hampton
- The people put Harold Washington in City Hall
- A city of struggle

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Stop Facebook from adding Zionist as a protected category under hate speech

Following is an open letter to Facebook:

Just yesterday, emails from an employee in the Facebook content policy team regarding the company's position on the term "Zionist" were leaked widely online. The emails revealed that Facebook is "looking at the question of how we should interpret attacks on 'Zionists' to determine whether the term is used as a proxy for attacking Jewish or Israeli people." The email also stated that this evaluation was taking place in the context of Facebook's policy of prohibiting hate speech.

To draw a parallel between critiques of racist Israeli apartheid and racist hate speech is insulting and inaccurate. Every day, the Palestinian peoples' rights to self-determination are trampled. The racist Zi-

onist state of Israel constantly wages war upon Palestinian communities in a land where the Israeli government is the real trespasser. A week ago, Israeli tanks carpet bombed multiple neighborhoods in Gaza City in the middle of the night. Brutally awoken from sleep, families were forced to flee from their burning homes. This is normal in occupied Palestine. Human rights violations of this level require strong public condemnation. When Palestinian organizations and freedom fighters attack Zionism online, they aren't attacking Judaism. They're attacking a brutal, racist system of oppression bent on the exploitation and murder of the Palestinian people.

On that note, it is crucial that Zionism is distinguished from Judaism. They are not the same thing.

There is a common misconception that Zionism came about as a popular movement in the Jewish community. Quite the opposite is true. Zionism is an ideology of the few and the wealthy. After the horrors of the holocaust, opportunist Jewish and non-Jewish capitalists and fascists took advantage of a people reeling from Nazi persecution to establish an imperialist satellite in Palestine. Since that time, Israel has diligently served the United States and its imperialist allies. The distinction between Zionism and Judaism is further shown by the growing anti-Zionist consciousness among the younger Jewish community. For many young people, it is impossible to rationalize the values taught in synagogue and the horrific war crimes perpetrated in the name of a

"Jewish homeland."

In reality, Zionism is bad for all Palestinians and all working-class Jewish people. This toxic ideology divides the global working-class community and creates a false mythology of inherent hatred between Jews and Arabs. The anti-Zionist Jewish authors of this letter and the entire Socialist Unity Party stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people in their battle against Zionist apartheid. We wholeheartedly condemn Facebook's attempt to thwart the discourse of that struggle.

Signed,

Lev Koufax, Miranda Etel and Ian Shlakman

Support the "Facebook, We Need to Talk" campaign's petition. <http://tinyurl.com/2dt6hgfx>

Hamburg protest: Free Ahmad Sa'adat, free Palestine!

By No Pasarán Hamburg

On Jan. 23, we took part in a rally for the freedom of comrade Commander Ahmad Sa'adat in Hamburg, Germany. Sa'adat, who is general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), is one of more than 4,500 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails. The rally took place as part of the International Week of Action, which was called by Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network.

During his tenure as senator, current U.S. President Joseph Biden said, "It's about time we stop apologizing for our support for Israel, there's no apology to be made. It is the best \$3 billion investment we make. If there weren't an Israel, the United States of America would have to invent an Israel to protect her interests in the region."



The stringing together of oppression, exploitation and genocide — these are the results of the U.S. settlement policy and that is precisely



PHOTOS: NO PASARÁN HAMBURG

Protest for Ahmad Sa'adat in Hamburg, Germany, Jan. 23. Banner reads: Down with imperialism and all its lackeys!

the goal and practice of the Israeli government. Just as the "headquarters of global democracy" in Washington, D.C., exterminated 95% of the North American Indigenous peoples, so does the so-called "only democracy of the Middle East" want to implement this policy towards

the Palestinians.

Given Joe Biden's honesty and his promise that nothing fundamental will change, we can give an equally sober reply, that there is still only one word to describe such a system and state: apartheid.

Translated by Greg Butterfield

Repercusiones negativas de las 'sanciones'

Continúa de página 8

rostros, nombres y apellidos. En 2019 y como consecuencia de las "sanciones" 12 niños con leucemia no pudieron recibir el trasplante de médula ósea porque los bancos se negaron a hacer las transferencias. Lotes de medicamentos han sido retenidos por el bloqueo económico, así como han sido retenidos alimentos. En pandemia no ha sido diferente, por el contrario, intensificaron las "sanciones" y bloquearon el combustible imprescindible para trasladar alimentos, medicamentos y pacientes. Una joven de 18 años en pleno trabajo de parto falleció en Maturín porque la ambulancia no tenía gasolina. También falleció un joven en Táchira por falta de gasolina. Testimonios como estos hay muchos.

A confesión de parte... son crímenes de lesa humanidad. Lo que en

2013 comenzó de manera encubierta, poco a poco ha sido formalizado mediante leyes y órdenes ejecutivas por parte de los gobiernos de EEUU. También ha sido descaradamente confesado por los voceros de la Casa Blanca quienes no solo han manifestado que nos han estado bloqueando, atacando nuestra moneda y que el blanco principal es Pdvs, sino que además han reconocido públicamente el sufrimiento que estas acciones implicarán para todo el pueblo venezolano. William Brownfield dijo que las "sanciones" contra Pdvs tendrían un impacto en el pueblo entero y que era necesario acelerar el colapso aunque ello implicara sufrimiento de meses o años.

Los crímenes de lesa humanidad son, según el Estatuto de Roma, "aquellos que se cometen como parte de un ataque generalizado y sistemático contra una población civil y

con conocimiento de dicho ataque".

Las excusas. Creyéndose los policías del mundo, de manera unilateral y violando el derecho internacional humanitario, EEUU ha intentado justificar las medidas coercitivas con el discurso de supuesta dictadura y narcoestado en Venezuela.

Los últimos 8 años se han realizado 8 elecciones en Venezuela con un sistema electoral automatizado que en menos de 24 horas arroja resultados irreversibles y que además ha sido auditado por todas las partes que participan en la contienda electoral.

Sin ninguna prueba, como han solido hacer para justificar injerencias (recordemos la guerra en Irak) nos han acusado de narcoestado. Es el caso que, en los informes publicados por Naciones Unidas, Venezuela ni siquiera figura como país productor, consumidor, ni distribuidor de drogas.

La verdadera razón detrás de las agresiones de EEUU contra el pueblo venezolano las expuso Elliot Abrams ante la Cámara de Representantes de ese país, dijo: "Nosotros, que somos los campeones de la democracia en el mundo, siempre hemos probado que el socialismo ha sido un fracaso en todos los lugares en donde ha tratado de imponerse, y por lo tanto no podemos permitir que en Venezuela eso sea la excepción."

Respuesta del gobierno bolivariano, del pueblo y de su Fuerza Armada. Cómo el pueblo venezolano, el gobierno y la fuerza armada hemos resistido democrática y pacíficamente durante 8 años ante tamaña embestida es información valiosísima que la doctora Douhan debería recabar en su visita. Quizás agendar reuniones con el pueblo de a pie podría aportar a esta importante tarea que le fue encomendada.



La defensa de la energía a manos del pueblo

Desde Puerto Rico para
RADIO CLARIN de Colombia,
les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

<https://clarindecolumbia.info/index.php/radio-clarin-de-colombia>



Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Buenos días audiencia,

En Puerto Rico, mientras logramos un consenso en el Movimiento de Liberación Nacional que nos conduzca más efectivamente a la descolonización, tenemos que lidiar con el neoliberalismo que empuja por un lado la privatización de los servicios esenciales y por otro, la destrucción de los sindicatos y organizaciones defensoras de los intereses del pueblo.

Uno de los varios frentes de batalla en estos momentos es la defensa de la energía a manos del pueblo. Puerto Rico, aún siendo una colonia, se ha distinguido por haber llevado la electricidad a todos los rincones del archipiélago, y tener un sindicato de trabajadores de la energía verdaderamente militante y clasista,

Censuras por Facebook

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Buenos días audiencia,

En estos días de pandemia, cuando las restricciones nos impiden reunirnos físicamente, las redes sociales han cobrado enorme importancia. La izquierda internacion-

al ha usado estas plataformas en un intento por superar el aislamiento y poder continuar nuestro trabajo.

AUNQUE antes hemos sido objeto de censuras por Facebook y Twitter, estos últimos días han aumentado los ataques.

No es accidental que luego de la suspensión de cuentas de la derecha fascista estadounidense, se hayan dedicado a censurar sin ningún motivo, las cuentas de organizaciones y activistas de izquierda en varias ciudades de Estados Unidos, en Puerto Rico y en Bretaña.

Mi cuenta personal de Facebook fue suspendida sin posibilidad de apelación, junto a las de 15 miembros más del Partido de Socialismo Unido de EUA, el periódico La Lucha, la página de Mujeres en Lucha y otras. No fue hasta que comenzamos una campaña mediática, que las reintegraron.

Igual sucedió con el Partido Socialista de Trabajadores de Bretaña.

Esto nos debe alertar para defender estos espacios que aunque sean entes privadas, tienen un cometido social público que no debe ser censurado.

Exigimos a Facebook una disculpa pública y diga el motivo de la censura.

Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

Repercusiones negativas de las ‘sanciones’

Por Pasqualina Curcio

Atendiendo a la invitación hecha por el presidente Nicolás Maduro, la doctora Alena Douhan visitará nuestra Nación. La doctora Douhan es la Relatora Especial sobre la Repercusión Negativa de las Medidas Coercitivas Unilaterales en el disfrute de los Derechos Humanos. Viene a recabar la información relacionada con la afectación de las mal denominadas sanciones impuestas por Estados Unidos contra el pueblo venezolano. A propósito de su visita consideramos pertinente realizar algunas precisiones.

Los tiempos. Las medidas coercitivas unilaterales iniciaron el año 2013 y no el 2017 como algunos afirman. Con prácticas encubiertas, el gobierno de EEUU obstaculizó, desde el 2013, las transacciones de Venezuela con el sistema financiero internacional, incluyendo el acceso a créditos. La manipulación del índice de riesgo financiero del país fue una de las acciones que emprendieron. De repente éste pasó de 768 en 2012 a 2.625 en 2016. Varió, inexplicablemente 242% en un contexto en el que nuestro país contaba con US\$ 30.000 millones de reservas internacionales, ingresaban alrededor de US\$ 88.000 millones anuales por exportaciones y cumplíamos puntualmente con los compromisos de deuda externa: solo entre 2013 y 2015 pagamos unos US\$ 60.000 millones.

En 2016, Commerzbank de Alemania cerró las cuentas de Pdvsa. Citibank hizo lo propio y el Novo Banco de Portugal informó la imposibilidad de realizar operaciones



Refinería de petróleo venezolana.

Foto: Bill Hackwell

en dólares con Venezuela. Estos son solo algunos ejemplos.

El bloqueo financiero comenzó mucho antes de que Obama emitiera la Orden Ejecutiva mediante la cual nos declaró como una “amenaza inusual y extraordinaria a la seguridad nacional y política exterior de EEUU”.

No son solo las “sanciones”. Las agresiones de EEUU contra los venezolanos no se limitan a las “sanciones”. Entre el 2013 y el 2016 los venezolanos padecemos una escasez programada e inducida de productos esenciales que derivó en largas filas y racionamientos consecuencia de la alteración de los canales de distribución por parte de los monopolios transnacionales. Una escasez inexplicable en un país que, para ese período registraba el PIB más alto en 30 años y 70% mayor que el de 2020.

Silenciosamente en 2013 el gobierno de EEUU comenzó a atacar

nuestra moneda induciendo una escalada en los precios. Entre 2013 y 2020 EEUU ha inducido una depreciación del bolívar por el orden de 234.009.360.274% derivando en una variación de 30.700.127.469% de los precios. En un primer momento lo hicieron de manera encubierta hasta que, en diciembre de 2019, el senador republicano Richard Black confesó que han sido ellos quienes han desmonetizado el bolívar.

No son solo números, son rostros, nombres y apellidos. El bloqueo económico y financiero no solo ha dificultado la importación

de bienes esenciales, también ha afectado la producción petrolera y por consiguiente el abastecimiento interno de combustible, así como la exportación de hidrocarburos que nos generan el 90% de los ingresos en divisas. La producción de petróleo ha caído 82% entre 2013 y 2020, mientras que las exportaciones han disminuido 76%. Paralelamente, el ataque al bolívar no solo ha inducido una escalada de los precios, sino que también ha afectado la producción nacional debido a la pérdida del poder adquisitivo.

Como consecuencia del bloqueo a Pdvsa y del ataque al bolívar, los venezolanos hemos dejado de producir alrededor de US\$ 170.000 millones solo entre 2016 y 2019. Cifra que, para los venezolanos, equivale a la importación de medicinas y alimentos para 40 años, o el equivalente a los recursos necesarios para la prestación de los servicios de salud, público y privado, durante 25 años, o para la educación en todos sus niveles durante 20 años.

A estas pérdidas económicas debemos sumar los casi US\$ 25.000 millones que nos tienen retenidos en la banca internacional o que nos han robado en activos, como es el caso de Citgo, filial de Pdvsa.

Estos grandes números tienen

Continúa a página 7